



January 21, 2025

The Honorable Bruce Westerman  
U.S. House of Representatives  
202 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Scott Peters  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2369 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: *Fix Our Forests Act***

Dear Chairman Westerman and Congressman Peters:

On behalf of the National Special Districts Association (NSDA) and the thousands of special districts across the country, thank you for reintroducing the *Fix Our Forests Act* (H.R.471). Special districts play a pivotal role in providing essential services, from fire protection and water management to environmental stewardship and emergency response. Many of our members are on the front lines of managing the impacts of forest degradation and the increasing threats posed by catastrophic wildfires. As such, we are acutely aware of the vital role that well-managed forests play in safeguarding the health of our environment and the safety of the communities we serve.

The *Fix Our Forests Act* presents a meaningful solution to longstanding challenges in vegetation management and wildfire prevention. It does so by streamlining forestry project processes, expanding categorical exclusions, and fostering stronger partnerships between federal agencies and local stakeholders. By expediting environmental reviews and enabling more adaptive management practices, the measure would ensure that forest health and wildfire mitigation efforts can respond effectively to the growing threats posed by an ever changing climate.

A key feature of this legislation is its emphasis on local input and collaboration. The bill creates valuable opportunities for special districts to contribute to forest health projects that align with community safety and environmental sustainability goals. By empowering local entities and enhancing coordination with federal partners, FOFA strengthens our collective ability to protect critical infrastructure, safeguard water supplies, and ensure the health and safety of the communities we serve. Additionally, the Act expands the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) to include special districts, allowing them to collaborate with the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management on cross-jurisdictional restoration work. While capacity varies among districts, many are well-equipped to contribute to GNA projects through their local expertise and existing conservation initiatives.

For these reasons, NSDA strongly endorses the *Fix Our Forests Act* and looks forward to its swift consideration and passage. We appreciate your leadership on this critical issue and stand ready to support your efforts. If you have any questions or if you need any additional information, please feel free to contact Hasan Sarsour at 202-898-1444 ([hs@paragonlobbying.com](mailto:hs@paragonlobbying.com)).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ann A. Terry". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ann Terry  
Chair, National Special Districts Coalition